Please replace specification paragraphs 12, 16-17, 20, 25 and 29 with the respective replacement paragraphs below.

[0012] Mobile switching center 113 may comprise anyone of a number of known communications switching devices, including those commonly used and known in the art for providing either digital or analog cellular telephone service to a plurality of wireless devices 110. The mobile switching center 113 performs switching functions to permit communication between the intermediate network 128 and the wireless device [[12]] 110. Although only one mobile switching center 113 is shown, it will be understood that system 10 likely includes many more.

[0016] The components of gateway 115 may be connected over an internal network [[12]] 102, [[14]] 104, and [[16]] 106, which may be a local area network (LAN). One or more wireless network exchanges such as Mobitex® regional switches 111 and 113, which may reside at separate locations, communicate with gateway 115 through Nrouters 30 and 32. The communication between regional switch 113 and the Nrouters may use, for example, an X.25 protocol. Nrouters 30 and 32, in turn, communicate with protocol handlers 40 and 42 over internal network [[12]] 102 using, for example, X-sockets.

[0017] Protocol handlers 40, 42 use data from user database machine 50 to communicate externally to gateway 115 via network [[16]] 106. An Internet mail router 60 is connected to internal network 16 and handles inbound and outbound communications traffic with an external network such as the Internet 128, as well as X-sockets traffic. If necessary, a separate X-sockets machine and backup machine (not shown) can be added.

[0020] According to an embodiment of the present invention, message store 52 includes a module to control mail messages sent from wireless network 114. Such a module may be implemented using hardware or software. Those skilled in the art will appreciate, however, that the process described below may be implemented at any level, ranging

from hardware to application software and in any appropriate physical location. For example, the module may be implemented as software code to be executed by the message store 52 using any suitable computer language such as, for example, microcode, and may be stored in, for example, an electrically erasable programmable read only memory (EEPROM), or can be configured into the logic of the prepaid server 18. According to another embodiment, the module may be implemented as software code to be executed by the prepaid server 18 using any suitable computer language such as, for example, Java, Perl, C or C++ using, for example, conventional or object-oriented techniques. The software code may be stored as a series of instructions or commands on a computer readable medium, such as random access memory (RAM), read only memory (ROM), a magnetic medium such as a hard-drive or a floppy disk, or an optical medium such as CD-ROM. The module may also be a computer, such as a workstation or a personal computer, a microprocessor, a network server, a Java virtual machine, or an application specific integrated circuit, using any suitable type of computer instruction.

[0025] FIG. 3 illustrates an embodiment of a user interface 10 with which users can activate the non-forwarding feature. User interface [[10]] 150 includes a new message window 12 and a message options window 14 according to an embodiment of the present invention. New message window 12 allows a user to compose a new message 16 in a conventional manner. Options window 14 allows a sender to provide certain instructions to the system l0 in connection with the delivery of the message composed in message window 12. To display the options window 14, the sender typically selects Options [[18]] (not shown) from a View menu 20. The new message window 12 and options window 14 represent Microsoft Outlook 2000® 2000 windows for illustration purposes. Those skilled in the art will recognize, however, that these examples do not limit the invention to a particular electronic mail system, but that the invention is applicable to any electronic mail system.

[0029] If the recipient forwards message 16 to a third party in step 222, gateway 115 will interrupt the process and read the message identifier associated with message 16 and, in step 224, search storage medium 218 for a matching entry. If, in step 226, message 16 has

an active non- forwarding request (i.e., gateway 115 finds a matching entry in storage medium [118] <u>218</u>), gateway 115 blocks forwarding of message 16 in step 228 and, optionally, notifies the sender of the forwarded message in step 230 before proceeding to an end in step 232. If no matching entry is found in storage medium [[118]] <u>218</u>, gateway 115 routes message 16 in a conventional manner in step 234.